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Information and communication technologies for development

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Mr. Mohamed Chérif Diallo (Guinea), on the basis of informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.26

Information and communication technologies for development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 56/183 of 21 December 2001, 57/238 of 20 December 2002, 57/270 B of 23 June 2003, 59/220 of 22 December 2004, 60/252 of 27 March 2006 and 62/182 of 19 December 2007, Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/3 of 18 July 2008, 63/202 of 19 December 2008 and other relevant resolutions,

Noting that cultural diversity is the common heritage of humankind and that the information society should be founded on and stimulate respect for cultural identity, cultural and linguistic diversity, traditions and religions, and foster dialogue among cultures and civilizations, and noting also that the promotion, affirmation and preservation of diverse cultural identities and languages as reflected in relevant agreed United Nations documents, including the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,[1] will further enrich the information society,

Recalling the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society at its first phase, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003,[2] as endorsed by the General Assembly,[3] and the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society adopted by the

[1] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Thirty-first Session, Paris, 15 October-3 November 2001*, vol. I and corrigendum, *Resolutions*, chap. V, resolution 25, annex I.

[2] See A/C.2/59/3, annex.

[3] See resolution 59/220.

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Summit at its second phase, held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005,[4] and endorsed by the General Assembly,[5]

Recalling also the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[6]

Taking note of the 2009 report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society outcomes at the regional and international levels,[7]

Stressing the need to reduce the digital divide and to ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies, are available to all,

Recognizing the importance of the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum as a multi-stakeholder forum for dialogue in which various matters are discussed, including, inter alia, public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance with a view to fostering the sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development of the Internet, and reiterating that all Governments, on an equal footing, should fulfil their roles and responsibilities, which encompass international Internet governance and ensuring the stability, security and continuity of the Internet, but not the day-to-day technical and operational matters, which do not impact on international public policy issues,

Taking note of the discussions at the fourth meeting of the Internet Governance Forum held in Sharm-el-Sheik, Egypt, from 15 to 18 November 2009 on the future of the Forum, which generally welcomed the renewal of its mandate and recognized the need for further discussion on improvement of its working methods,

Recalling the first, second, third and fourth meetings of the Internet Governance Forum, held in Athens in October and November 2006, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in November 2007, in Hyderabad, India, in December 2008, and in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2009, respectively, and welcoming the convening of the fifth meeting of the Forum, to be held in Vilnius in 2010,

Welcoming in view of the existing gaps in information and communication technologies infrastructure, the Summits of Connect Africa held in Kigali in October 2007 and in Cairo in May 2008 and the Connect the Commonwealth of Independent States Summit held in Minsk in November 2009, which are regional initiatives that are aimed at mobilizing human, financial and technical resources to accelerate the implementation of the connectivity goals of the World Summit on the Information Society,

Recognizing the role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in assisting the Economic and Social Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up, in particular the review and assessment, of progress made in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, while at the same time maintaining its original mandate on science and technology for development,

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[4] See A/60/687.

[5] See resolution 60/252.

[6] See resolution 60/1.

[7] A/64/64-E/2009/10.

Noting the contribution of the Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development,

Noting also the twelfth session of the Commission, held in Geneva from 25 to 29 May 2009, and the intersessional meeting of the Commission, held in Geneva from 9 to 11 November 2009,

Taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/7 of 24 July 2009 on assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,

Stressing that, for the majority of the poor, the developmental promise of science and technology, including information and communication technologies, remains unfulfilled, and emphasizing the need to effectively harness technology, including information and communication technologies, to bridge the digital divide,

Recognizing the pivotal role of the United Nations system in promoting development, including with respect to enhancing access to information and communication technologies, inter alia, through partnerships with all relevant stakeholders,

1. *Recognizes* that information and communication technologies have the potential to provide new solutions to development challenges, particularly in the context of globalization, and can foster economic growth, competitiveness, access to information and knowledge, poverty eradication and social inclusion that will help to expedite the integration of all countries, particularly developing countries, into the global economy;

2. *Stresses* the important role of Governments in the design of public policies and in the provision of public services responsive to national needs and priorities through, inter alia, making effective use of information and communication technologies, on the basis of a multi-stakeholder approach, to support national development efforts;

3. *Recognizes* that, in addition to financing by the public sector, financing of information and communication technologies infrastructure by the private sector has come to play an important role in many countries and that domestic financing is being augmented by North-South flows and South-South cooperation;

4. *Also recognizes* that information and communication technologies present new opportunities and challenges, and that there is a pressing need to address the major impediments that developing countries face in accessing the new technologies, such as insufficient resources, infrastructure, education, capacity, investment and connectivity and issues related to technology ownership, standards and flows, and in this regard calls upon all stakeholders to provide adequate resources, enhanced capacity-building and technology transfer, on mutually agreed terms, to developing countries, particularly the least developed countries;

5. *Further recognizes* the immense potential that information and communication technologies have in promoting the transfer of technologies in a wide spectrum of socio-economic activity;

6. *Acknowledges* that a gender divide exists as part of the digital divide and encourages all stakeholders to ensure the full participation of women in the

information society and women's access to the new technologies, especially information and communication technologies for development;

7. *Recalls* the improvements and innovations in financing mechanisms, including the creation of a voluntary Digital Solidarity Fund, as mentioned in the Geneva Declaration of Principles,[2] and, in this regard, invites voluntary contributions to its financing;

8. *Recognizes* that South-South cooperation, particularly through triangular cooperation, can be a useful tool to promote the development of information and communication technologies;

9. *Encourages* strengthened and continuing cooperation between and among stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of the outcomes of the Geneva[3] and Tunis[4] phases of the World Summit on the Information Society, through, inter alia, the promotion of national, regional and international multi-stakeholder partnerships, including public-private partnerships, and the promotion of national and regional multi-stakeholder thematic platforms, in a joint effort and dialogue with developing and least developed countries, development partners and actors in the information and communication technologies sector;

10. *Welcomes* the efforts undertaken by Tunisia, host of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the International Telecommunication Union and other relevant international and regional organizations, for organizing annually the ICT 4 All Forum and technological exhibition as a platform within the framework of the follow-up to the World Summit to promote a dynamic business environment for the information and communication technologies sector worldwide;

11. *Encourages* the United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, within their respective mandates, to contribute to the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, and emphasizes the need for resources in this regard;

12. *Notes* the organization of the World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2009 by the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to facilitate interaction between actors implementing the World Summit's action lines, and invites the organizers to fully engage Governments, international organizations, civil society and the private sector in the preparations for the World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2010, to be held from 10 to 14 May 2010 in Geneva;

13. *Recognizes* the urgent need to harness the potential of knowledge and technology, and in that regard encourages the United Nations development system to continue its effort to promote the use of information and communication technologies as a critical enabler of development and a catalyst for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

14. *Recognizes* the role of the United Nations Group on the Information Society as an inter-agency mechanism of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination designed to coordinate United Nations implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society outcomes;

15. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council to consider the report of the Secretary-General on enhanced cooperation on public policy issues pertaining to the Internet;[8]

16. *Invites* Member States to support the meaningful participation of stakeholders from developing countries in the preparatory meetings of the Internet Governance Forum and in the Forum itself in 2010;

17. *Encourages* Member States, the private sector and all other relevant stakeholders to consider strengthening the secretariat of the Internet Governance Forum in order to support its activities and operations, in accordance with its mandate, including by providing additional funds, where possible, to the Trust Fund in support of the secretariat;

18. *Requests* the Commission, during its thirteenth session, which will be held at the halfway point to the 2015 overall review, to organize a substantive discussion on the progress made over five years in the implementation of the World Summit outcomes, including consideration of the modalities of implementation and follow-up to the World Summit, and invites all facilitators and stakeholders to take this into account with regard to their contribution to that session;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the status of the implementation of and follow-up to the present resolution.

[8] E/2009/92.